File

The Fifth Victory Loan was over, - or should have.been over three days ago. We had managed to reach our objective. By tears and entreaties, by sneers and sarcasm, by promises of a new heaven and a new earth, by any means considered fair in love or war, we had done it. And now it was all over.

Or was it?

Applications were coming in thick and fast now. We were tired. We were peevish. Our bank slips SR-10 had run out for the second time. No wonder - with applications to every Bank and Trust Company and Treasury Branch in Canada. No two to the same branch - ever. That is, from the outside. The town stuff ran fairly true to form - we have a Bank here. One thing we had learned, that gold is where you least expect to find it.

I was sitting at my somewhat senile typewriter, grousing about everything in general, when in walked Old Meadowbrook.

"Sorry, Charley" he said. Charley is Organizer. "Sorry I couldn't get down sooner, but glad you went over." We told him our story.

"That reminds me" he said. He speaks with a slow Yorkshire accent. "That reminds me of the time we had that big Board of Trade Membership drive in Athabasca."

" I was managin' the 'otel, Charley, ye remember, and Derberville was banker here at the time. A good man was Derberville. Thought a lot about this place, he did. This Board of Trade business was his idea.

Ye know, Charley, how we was always tryin' to put Athabasca on the map in those days. And now that there Highway has put it on the map in a way we never dreamed of.

Well, sir, we had over five hundred names on that list. We had names from all over Canada. We had a sheet twenty-two and a half feet long - I pasted them end to end - I still have it. - with those names on. Oh, Athabasca was quite famous over that." he said.

"Well sir" he continued, " there ~~were~~ was several fellows that ~~were~~ was pretty tough. Derberville tried to get them, to sign and he couldn't , so he bet me a bottle of Scotch that I couldn't get them ~~to sign~~. I ~~wun~~ won two bottles that way.

But there was one guy that Derberville tried hard to get. I went into the Bank one day and he says to me "George" he says 'I'll bet you a bottle of Scotch that you wont get Bill Sanders' either' he says, 'and you wont get this bottle. ~~xixhex~~' either'

I says 'No?'

Well, sir, I walked out of that Bank, and the first person I met - by Gee - was ~~the~~ this same Bill. I was just crossin' the street towards your store here, Charley, and I stopped him on the corner.

'Bill' i says 'How about joinin the Board of Trade?' I says. "You're about the only mana around here that hasn't joined up with us.

'No?" he says 'Well, I'm not joinin' up with no Board of Trade', he says. 'They cawnt cant give me what I want'.

'Cawnt Can't give ya what ya want? I says ' What de ya want?'

'I want a LAKE' he says ------'to trap rats' (trap rawts)
You want a lake' I says. - You joost put your 'Matt' I says
name on that there paper and give me a dollar
and tomorrow morning you'll have five hundred men in
Edmonton and Athabasca and all over, workin'
and talkin' for ya, to get you your lake!

'I will? he says, surprised like.

' Ya sure will! I says. (continue) He dug

~~He dug~~ down in his dirty old overalls, and
handed me the dollar. 'Now' I says ' write yer name
there.

He put the paper upagainst the wall of
ypur store there, Charley, to write his name
and while he was writin' it, there was ~~I~~ me
thoomin' me nose at Derberville in 't Bawnk
across 't road.

" But what did you do about his Lake? " we
asked, when we could stop laughing. Did you get
him a concession to trap muskrats on Baptiste Lake?
or what? "

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"Oh, I dont know about that" he said. "I never heard any more about it - - and I never asked.

"I got me bottle of Scotch, though" he added with a twinkle in his eye.

"I sure did" he repeated reminiscently.

Barbara V. Parker

Athabasca, Alberta
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1943